

List Reviews & Campaign Staging





1601 Trapelo Road
Suite 329
Waltham, MA 02451
www.constantcontact.com

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List Reviews & Campaign Staging

As a leader in permission-based email marketing, we strive to provide you with the tools and know-how you need to be a successful email marketer. One way that we try to help improve your effectiveness is with reviews of your subscriber list and account usage. Often times we initially review your subscriber list and new account to help you hit the ground running. Later when your list grows, we might touch base with you again to help you keep your marketing goals on track.

The intent of this document is to acquaint you with our list review process, a key element of Constant Contact's email marketing service. Below you will find the answers to frequently asked questions regarding list reviews and campaign staging. Please read through them as they will set your expectations about the process and allow you to effectively plan and manage your first campaigns with Constant Contact.

List Reviews

What is a list review?

A list review is a simple and quick phone call in which we find out about you as a customer and help you define your business' email marketing needs. During the list review process, our Customer Support Team shows you how to safely grow and maintain your subscriber list, familiarizes you with industry best practices, and provides tips on how to create professional campaigns that your subscribers will not confuse with spam.

The list review includes an analysis of your account usage and a discussion of the source, type and age of your email list. It gives us the opportunity to check that you understand our permission-based policies and make suggestions on how to handle potentially problematic email addresses.

Not only is this an invaluable coaching tool for learning how to tune up your campaigns and better manage your subscriber lists, it is an important part of how we get to know you and your business as a customer. In addition to answering any questions that you may have about campaign delivery, we also help devise customer-specific solutions that best suit your planned account usage. The best part is that it only takes a few minutes of your time to help us ensure you use a good quality list and have successful campaigns.

Why is a list review necessary?

"Why?" you ask. Because successful customers are happy customers! Constant Contact helps you optimize your email marketing initiatives so you will be happier with the results, more effective in your campaigns, and more inclined to stay with our product! In getting to know your business, we can offer you suggestions and solutions for getting the most out of our services. In outlining our list expectations and removing any potentially problematic addresses, we can continue to guarantee you and our entire customer base an exceptional email deliverability rate.

As you may have guessed, the prevention of "spam" is another major reason for these reviews. Although spam can be a subjective term, our research shows that customers that do not use permission-based lists get higher than normal rates of spam complaints and bounced addresses. Our list reviews improve your list quality and contribute to our overall high email delivery rate by helping to decrease the number of spam complaints you might get per mailing.

How am I notified of my list review?

You may be prompted for a list review after adding a subscriber list or scheduling a campaign. You are sent an email notifying you about your list review. In addition, an “Alert” notification or pop-up displays instructing you to call Customer Support for a review. You will be unable to mail from your account until you have contacted our Customer Support Team for this list review.

What are Constant Contact’s email list requirements?

Constant Contact requires your email lists to be based on your subscribers granting you explicit permission to send to them. Every email address on your mailing list must have given you direct permission or have been clearly notified that he or she would receive future electronic mailings from you. Whether your business collects addresses via websites, tradeshow, seminars or other means of sign-up, there must be a clearly written statement and/or provision for a customer to “opt-in” to receive your mailings. If your address collection methods do not include this practice, your list is not what Constant Contact considers to be “permission-based” and may be rejected.

Constant Contact considers the following examples of list collection processes to be unacceptable:

- Purchasing from a vendor
- Obtaining your list from third parties
- Obtaining your list through directory searching
- Obtaining your list by scraping internet pages

Constant Contact also expects your mailing list to be as “clean” as possible before you import it to our system. Your list should be recently aged, as well as scrubbed of both “role” and illegitimate addresses. Constant Contact cannot be used as a “cleaning service” for your older or poorly maintained lists. These lists consistently result in high abuse complaints and bounce rates, and directly impact email delivery rates. Either clean your lists before you import them into your account or use our list-building tools and tips to start a new list quickly.

What are “role” addresses?

Role addresses represent distribution email addresses that often mail to more than one person. Examples include sales@, admin@, support@, marketing@, info@, etc. Because multiple individuals usually monitor these addresses, it is unlikely that all of them gave permission to be included in your mailing list. As a result, role addresses are likely to produce high spam complaints. They are apt to perform poorly over time and we ask that you remove them from your subscriber list prior to upload. Simply search the subscriber list for each (example, sales@), check all the addresses and remove them.

Note: We do recognize that there are times, however, when such addresses belong to only one individual (e.g. small business owners). If this is the case, you should ask the subscriber to provide an alternative address.

What does Constant Contact consider to be an illegitimate address?

All illegitimate addresses also need to be removed from your list. As a rule of thumb, these are the addresses that you do not think are real or do not recognize. A few examples of illegitimate addresses are as follows: 123@aol.com, abc@abc.com, nospam@hotmail.com

We know that at some point your mailings are going to become so popular, you simply cannot personally know every subscriber on your list. Even so, we expect you to periodically review your new addresses as they are added and remove the ones that may be illegitimate. This will help keep your list in tip-top shape and promote optimum performance.

What else is not allowed within Constant Contact?

Constant Contact has reserved the right to prohibit certain types of campaign content. During the course of a list review, your Customer Service Representative may assess your campaign content to discuss specific elements that may cause spam complaints or poor general performance. In some cases, your campaign release may be delayed until you can make the necessary changes designated to you by the Customer Service Representative. In the worst case, a campaign and perhaps even the account may be terminated. This decision is at the discretion of the Constant Contact Compliance Team.

Notes:

- To ensure the highest deliverability rates to our customers, Constant Contact also reserves the right to exclude specific industries from using our services.
- If there is a question as to whether your business falls within our accepted guidelines or what content is prohibited, please refer to our Prohibited Content and Commerce Statement. (<http://ccprod.roving.com/CCProhibitedContent.jsp>)

Campaign Staging

What is campaign staging?

Campaign staging is a way for us to test or gauge your campaign's performance without letting the whole mailing out at once. When your campaign is being "staged," Constant Contact releases small portions of the mailing over a 24-48 hour period and reviews the resulting bounce rates and spam complaints. A Customer Service Representative may decide that your campaign must be staged during the course of a list review.

Why does my campaign need to be staged?

High bounce rates and spam complaints negatively impact Constant Contact delivery rates by potentially causing our mail servers and IP addresses to be blocked or blacklisted. Therefore we normally require a campaign's staging after a list review. It is effective in protecting our mail servers, you, and overall customer base from the poorer quality lists that generate high bounce rates and spam complaints.

Not all list reviews result in campaign staging, but new or larger lists may become staged. Because of our

commitment to ensuring high delivery rates to all our customers, we must make sure that these particular lists perform well within our spam tolerance guidelines. By letting these campaigns mail slowly and monitoring the tracking statistics, we can prevent mailings that are likely to produce the high bounce rates and spam complaints, thus minimizing the damaging effects.

What do I need to do to stage my campaign?

All that is required is simply to “schedule” your campaign for the date and time you wish the first stage to be released. Constant Contact will take care of the rest. In the staging process, we ask that only one (1) campaign be scheduled for the same release time.

How long is it going to take and what should I expect?

A staged campaign generally sends to your designated subscriber list within twenty-four (24) to forty-eight (48) hours or two (2) business days. There are some instances when a review may take a little longer due to performance issues. After a small portion of the mailing is released, the Constant Contact Compliance Team reviews the campaign statistics. If the results are good, the remainder of the campaign will release the following morning. Campaigns scheduled for later in the day will get reviewed later in the afternoon and released the following business day. There are times however when this process may take longer. The decision to release the remainder of your campaign is at the sole discretion of Constant Contact's Compliance Team.

What are possible outcomes to staging my campaign?

Depending on staging results, there are 3 possible outcomes for the rest of the campaign:

Performance is Good
If your campaign's spam complaints and bounce rates are within Constant Contact's tolerances, Constant Contact generally releases the entire campaign within twenty-four (24) hours or one (1) business day.
Performance is Borderline
If your campaign receives higher than normal spam complaints or bounce rates, Constant Contact may choose to continue letting out the campaign incrementally. Often times this may take longer than the normal twenty-four (24) hours. The total length of time it may require to release the entire campaign greatly depends on the number of complaints being registered and the size of your subscriber list. When this campaign sends out completely, you may be asked to call a Constant Contact Support Engineer. Our Support Engineers are trained to offer suggestions on how to reduce complaints and get better performance from your list. Other suggestions for reducing complaints can be found in our Complaint Reduction Guide. However, ultimately it is you, the site owner, who knows your business and subscriber list best. Therefore it is you who will be required to make decisions on how to reduce complaints if they should continue to occur.
Performance is Unacceptable
If your campaign receives an unacceptable amount rate of spam complaints or bounces, Constant Contact may terminate the staging campaign and stop the mailing altogether. If this should happen, a member of the Compliance Team will phone you to advise you of the situation. The Compliance Team will list which actions need to be taken in order to continue mailing with Constant Contact. If the situation warrants it, the Compliance Team may also cancel an account outright.

What will I see while my campaign is staging?

A staged campaign displays on your Constant Contact homepage in “Running” status. You cannot view any reports or statistics until the campaign mailing completes in its entirety. You may create and schedule other campaigns during this time but we ask that you not schedule additional campaigns to be sent during the current campaign’s staging period.

Am I free to mail other campaigns after a list review and staging?

Yes. Once your first campaign has successfully completed, your account generally becomes free to schedule and send campaigns again. The Compliance Team may make exception to this if they believe certain restrictions or actions must be completed before the next campaign can be sent.

Will I ever need a List review or to be staged again?

The majority of our customers will never need another list review or staging again. However if a large number of new subscribers are added to your list you may be asked to call Constant Contact again to simply discuss your new list and how your mailing needs may have changed.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns about using the Constant Contact system, we provide free phone and email support, an online FAQ database and online tutorials.